



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

**Administrator**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

APR 16 2010

Ms. Ruth Milkman  
Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Support for Maritime Communications/Land Mobile LLC and Southern California  
Regional Rail Authority Request for License Modification and Part 80 Relief (DA 10-556  
and Docket WT-10-83)

Dear Ms. Milkman:

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) strongly supports the expeditious approval of the  
Maritime Communications/Land Mobile LLC (MCLM) and Southern California Regional  
Rail Authority (SCRRA) petitions to:

1. Modify the license for Automated Maritime Telecommunications System (AMTS)  
station WQGF318 by changing the regulatory status of a geographically partitioned  
portion of the license area from commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) to private  
mobile radio service (PMRS);
2. Assign the partitioned portion of the WQGF318 license area to SCRRA;
3. Waive the following sections:
  - 80.92(a) (listen-before-talk requirement);
  - 80.102(a) (station identification requirement);
  - 80.105 (requirement that coast stations acknowledge and receive all calls directed  
to them by ship or aircraft stations);
  - 80.123 (requirement to give priority to marine communications, and other  
operational and technical requirements for coast stations);
  - 80.215(h)(5)(i) (ship stations transmitter output power and effective radiated  
power limits);
  - 80.385(a)(2) (AMTS frequency assignments);

- 80.475(c) (requirement that AMTS systems provide PMRS only to stations whose licensees make cooperative arrangements with the AMTS coast station licensee); and
- 80.479(c) (requirement that “all affected licensees” provide written consent for mobile-to-mobile communications).

As noted in the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Public Notice of March 29, 2010, SCRRRA is subject to the December 31, 2015, statutory deadline (Public Law 110-432) for deploying an interoperable Positive Train Control (PTC) system,<sup>1</sup> and is aggressively pursuing implementation strategies to meet an earlier deadline of 2012. PTC systems interoperability requires implementing railroads to be able to communicate with each other using shared bandwidth at common frequencies.

Due to the large number of freight and passenger railroads operating in Southern California, and their intense operating tempo, the communications bandwidths required to ensure that the various locomotive, wayside, and office systems that comprise a PTC system are very large. Although PTC-220, LLC<sup>2</sup> and BNSF Railway (BNSF) have already acquired spectrum access rights in the 220–222 MHz frequency band, this spectrum is insufficient to support both these freight railroads operations as well as SCRRRA passenger/commuter operations. Consequently, it is necessary for SCRRRA to purchase additional spectrum access rights. Their failure to obtain the necessary spectrum will preclude their ability to comply with the statutory deployment and interoperability requirements of Public Law 110-432.

SCRRRA has proactively procured spectrum access rights to provide the necessary bandwidth to support SCRRRA operations as well as SCRRRA interoperability with freight railroads operating in the Los Angeles Basin. The ability to make use of this spectrum, however, requires FCC’s reclassification of the spectrum in question from CMRS to PMRS. FCC relief from some aspects of Part 80 is also required to allow necessary intercommunication between the various PTC system elements. Enforcement of the various elements of Part 80, for which relief is requested, would be detrimental to PTC operation by interrupting critical information flow.

The FRA deeply appreciates FCC’s earlier approval of the PTC-220<sup>3</sup> and BNSF’s<sup>4</sup> requests in support of PTC implementation, and urges it to expeditiously approve the SCRRRA and MCLM petitions.

My staff is available to address any questions that you may have regarding the regulatory requirements related to PTC systems as well as their design, implementation, and operation. Please feel free to contact me or any of the following persons at FRA: Associate

<sup>1</sup> PTC systems are complex computer systems that rely on wireless communications to prevent train-to-train collisions, protect against overspeed derailments, protect roadway workers operating within the limits of their authority, and prevent trains from running through misaligned switches.

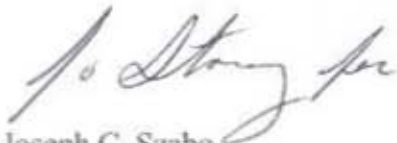
<sup>2</sup> A consortium of the Union Pacific Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railway.

<sup>3</sup> See PTC-220’s Request for Waivers of Certain 220 MHz Rules, Memorandum of Opinion and Order WT Docket No 08-256, DA 09-1425 (Released June 25, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> See ULS File Number 0003906654.

Administrator for Railroad Safety/Chief Safety Officer, Ms. Jo Strang (telephone: (202) 493-6300, email: Jo.Strang@dot.gov); Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development, Mr. Grady Cothen (telephone: (202) 493-6302, email: Grady.Cothern@dot.gov); or Senior Electronics Engineer, Dr. Mark Hartong (telephone: (202) 493-1332, email: Mark.Hartong@dot.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jo Strang for". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph C. Szabo  
Administrator